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DISCOURSE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL FORCE IN ENGLAND

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A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

ESTABLISHMENT

OF A

NATIONAL and CONSTITUTIONAL

FORCE

IN

ENGLAND.

BY
CHARLES LORD HAWKESBURY.

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1794.

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Piccadilly,
18th February, 1794.

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THE Conſtitution of every free Government is ſubject from time to time to a ſort of dangerous Criſis; which demands the attention of all who are concerned for its preſervation; a body, whoſe parts are ſo various, and ſo nicely framed, is by nature liable to frequent diſorders. The fluctuation of Property, the change of Manners, or diſpoſition in the People, and the ſhifting of Power from one

one neighbouring ſtate to another, muſt variouſly affect it: in abſolute Monarchies, evils of this kind ſeldom happen, and are eaſily removed by the interpoſition of that Power, whoſe Will is the ſimple and ſole reſource of ſuch a Government; but in the more complicated Machine of a free State greater caution muſt be uſed; if the Conſtitution is only through Age impaired, it muſt be called back to its firſt principles; but if ſome new emergency has ariſen, a new Remedy muſt be applied; ſuch an one, however, is as agreeable to the nature of the Conſtitution, and capable of being woven into the very ſpirit of it; leſt it ſhould chance to form an intereſt contrary to it, and in the event prove more fatal than the diſorder.

The Hiſtory of this country abounds with more of theſe critical periods than any other; and it is owing to the proper uſe our anceſtors made of them, that our Government has long been advancing by various ſteps towards perfection: they withſtood the repeated attempts both of Papal Innovation and Regal Oppreſſion; and though their ſtruggles frequently produced violent fevers in the State; yet the Conſti-

tution always came forth in more perfect health, and ſome new ſecurity was obtained for our freedom: and whilſt almoſt every other nation of Europe, who, like us, deſcended from one free and common ſtock, long ago became the ſubjects of arbitrary Power, and reſigned their Liberty, this country has always proved a faithful Guardian of that ſacred depoſit, and has alone improved the Bleſſing.

Poſterity, however, owe a double portion of acknowledgement to thoſe great Stateſmen, who directed our affairs at the Revolution, for contributing more at that time than any other to the perfection and ſecurity of our Conſtitution: nothing ſo much illuſtrates the wiſe conduct of theſe men, as comparing their eſtabliſhments and regulations, with what was done at the preceding period of the Reſtoration:—Then we find little more than meer temporary expedients, calculated juſt to reſettle the Exiled Family on the Throne; the Rights of King and People were left unaſcertained; and what little was done in favour of Liberty, had no ſufficient ſecurity for its continuance; the Wounds, that had been ſo long bleeding,

were

were ſo poorly and ſo ineffectually tampered with, that in a few years they opened again, and called for abler hands and more powerful remedies to heal them; ſuch was the work of the Revolution.—The wounds were then more deeply probed; the cauſes, that produced them, were endeavoured to be removed; laſting (and I hope they will prove perpetual) Ordinances were eſtabliſhed, which ſo juſtly ſettled the various claims of Power, that almoſt ſeventy years have ſeen no farther diſpute on that head: ſeveral of the regulations that were made at the Reſtoration were then repealed, ſome as unconſtitutional, others as ineffectual; one Statute, however, whoſe purport was inadequate to the uſes for which it was intended, remained without amendment; and by its deficiency rendered that happy ſettlement not fully complete;—the Militia Act, which paſſed the thirteenth of *Charles* the Second, was in itſelf a vague and ill-concerted ſcheme; and the deteſtable policy of that, and a ſubſequent reign, was to diſarm the People; and with the utmoſt art and application to render this Plan of a Militia ſtill more uſeleſs, and if any methods were propoſed to make

it

it ſerviceable, the Court would never ſuffer them to be debated; and ſuch Officers as were more zealous than others in exerciſing their Companies were reprimanded, as Fomenters of Rebellion:—one could have wiſhed therefore that thoſe perſons, to whom we were indebted for ſo many wiſe regulations in the year 1688, had planned ſome new Militia Law, more capable of execution, and more agreeable to the temper of our Conſtitution, than that, the defects of which they could not but have perceived; ſuch a work would have completely crowned this almoſt perfect Eſtabliſhment; Liberty would then have reſted ſecure, whilſt her own Votaries held the ſword, which gave her protection: and *Britain*, confiding in her own internal force, would have heard unalarmed of any attempt, which a Foreign Power might threaten againſt her.

I pay ſo great a reſpect to the Patriots of that age, that I would willingly aſſign ſome excuſe for this apparent neglect:——They might think, perhaps, that the Nation was not as yet ſufficiently calm to venture on putting arms in the hands of the People; the late ſtorms had been violent, and were but juſt over; and many, who condemned

the conduct of the abdicated Prince, ſtill retained a ſtrange attachment to his perſon—At that time alſo *France* was juſt entered into a war with all her neighbours; and was likely to find ſo much employment for her troops on her own frontiers, as not to be able to ſpare any conſiderable number to invade this country: our anceſtors, therefore, apprehenſive of ſome danger at that time in the attempt, and not convinced of its immediate neceſſity, might perhaps leave this defect to be remedied, and more maturely conſidered by their poſterity, giving them this opportunity of following their example, in framing wiſe regulations for the improvement of their country, by conſtituting ſuch a Militia, as would be ſufficient for its defence, but in no reſpect dangerous to its conſtitution; whenever the nation ſhould be in a better temper to receive it, and our ſituation in regard to any foreign enemy ſhould require its ſervice.

Such is our preſent Condition; never was a free people more unanimous in their attachment to Government; and whoever of ſuſpicious Principles yet remain, think it either imprudent or unfaſhionable to profeſs openly their opinions: we entered into

a War

a War with univerſal Impatience; and ſtand ſingly againſt a powerful Neighbour, who alone has frequently baffled the united force of *Europe*, and whoſe numerous and unemployed troops are now ready to take every Opportunity that may offer to invade our Country:——To this we can oppoſe a powerful Fleet, which will, I hope, be ſufficient to keep the Danger at a Diſtance; and yet, when we contend for ſo great a Stake, any perſon not liable to be alarmed with unreaſonable Apprehenſions, would wiſh, that ſome farther ſecurity was provided, and that ſome internal Conſtitutional Defence was eſtabliſhed; which might preſerve us not only from the Evil, but from (what in a commercial kingdom eſpecially is of no ſmall conſequence) the frequent terrors of it;—can we ſufficiently wonder, that a country like this, diſtinguiſhed by ſuch a variety of bleſſings, and where Commerce has heaped up ſuch immenſe ſtores of wealth, ſhould be leſs careful of its own ſecurity, than almoſt any other nation upon earth—leſs even than thoſe kingdoms, the miſeries of whoſe governments make them hardly worth preſervation?—And yet, when we conſider the natural advantages which it enjoys, we ſhall find no

Country, perhaps, more capable of its own defence; it abounds in natives; and, as an iſland, is not ſubject to any ſudden or unexpected attack; it wants no garriſoned Frontier to delay the approach of an enemy; a ſufficient time muſt always be given it to put any well-concerted plan of defence into execution: as much, however, as we have been engaged in wars for theſe laſt ſeventy years, no ſuch plan as this has as yet been eſtabliſhed;—ſudden, temporary, and eventually deſtructive expedients have been the whole of our Miniſterial Conduct. We have juſt lived from year to year, and all our Political art has been to deliver ourſelves in the laſt Winter from the difficulties which we had laid ourſelves under in the preceding;—To obviate, therefore, the plea or neceſſity of this fluctuating conduct, a plan of National Defence was propoſed in the laſt Seſſions of Parliament; experience ſeemed then to ſhew the neceſſity of it; and our ſituation required the immediate uſe of it; we were at vaſt expences, and yet we neither did or ſeemed able to do any thing: our Colonies were unprotected; our Fleets were inactive, we even trembled for our Mother Country: the fate of this plan is too well known; it ob-

tained the unanimous conſent of the Commons of *Great Britain*, and paſſed after various amendments and mature deliberations the lower Houſe of Parliament; and juſt as it was on the verge of life, was cruſhed and rejected in the upper.

I meddle not with the Proceedings of thoſe great Aſſemblies, to whoſe deciſions I pay a proper deference, though I am unacquainted with their reaſons; I ſhall only conſider thoſe arguments, which I have heard without doors urged againſt this plan by thoſe very few, who were not favourers of it.

The firſt and principal objection that has been made to this bill is, "that it will abridge "the Prerogative of the Crown, to whom the "Executive Power over the Militia is ſaid to "have always belonged, by obliging the King, "before he calls it into actual ſervice, to com-"municate the occaſion thereof firſt to Par-"liament."

I am ſorry by this objection to find a diſpute again ſtarted; which ſo much divided the Lawyers and Antiquarians of the laſt century, and was one great cauſe of all the blood that was ſhed in thoſe unhappy quarrels; eſpecially as the various claims of Power ſeem to be fairly compromiſed by this Clauſe;

Clauſe; the command of the Militia being given neither to the Crown, nor to the Legiſlature ſeparately; the principal part however, of the execution being lodged in the King, ſubject in the caſe alone of calling them out, to one reſtriction from the Parliament: and if the ſentiments of the wiſeſt men, unſupported by arguments, could ſingly have any weight on a rational mind, I could ſafely reſt this point on the opinions of Mr. *Seldon* and Mr. *Whitlock*, the firſt of whom ſpoke ſo warmly in the Houſe of Commons againſt the ſole power that was claimed by *Charles* the Firſt over the Militia, that the Court imputed to the influence of his arguments more than any thing elſe, the Vote that was paſſed againſt them on that head; and the latter as plainly declared in the ſame place, " that the power of the Militia was " not, according to Law, ſolely in the Crown, " but in the King and Parliament jointly;" and yet theſe men were not looked upon as over-violent ſpirits in thoſe days: *Charles* had ſo good an opinion of the former, that he deſigned the higheſt employment of the Law in his favour: and whoever peruſes the ſpeech of the latter, from whence the above

above ſentiment is extracted,* will be ſufficiently ſatisfied of his moderation.—That we may not however rely ſolely on the opinion of others, it may not be amiſs to look a little into what accounts remain of the ſeveral ſorts of Militia, that have exiſted in this Country: the ſubject is dark and abſtruſe; and yet ſome traces may perhaps from thence be diſcovered of the reſpective powers, that have in that particular been lodged either in King or People; and though our inquiries on that head ſhould not be ſucceſsful, they will lead us at leaſt to the knowledge of thoſe armies in which our anceſtors placed their ſafety; and from what difference of policy it has ariſen, that this kingdom, when neither ſo wealthy nor ſo populous as at preſent, had yet a greater internal force within it, and was more ſecure from foreign Invaſions.

Our *Saxon* anceſtors, as much as they are ridiculed for their ignorance and barbarity, were poſſeſſed of one piece of knowledge, ſuperior in real uſe to many modern refinements, I mean that of wiſely conſtituting

* See the ſpeech in *Ruſhworth*.

civil

civil ſocieties; their military eſtabliſhments were, however, the moſt diſtinguiſhing parts of their Governments; by theſe they were all bound to the defence of their country, whenever it was attacked; and the nature indeed of ſociety ſeems to require, that they, who enter into it for the preſervation of their property, ſhould equally join in repelling any attempt that might be made upon it; this obligation, therefore, was the common fealty and allegiance which every native owed; and which, if neglected or refuſed, according to the old *Saxon* Law, rendered the party guilty of High Treaſon againſt his Country, and his eſtate under the penalty of forfeiture: —Theſe were called forth into ſervice as often as occaſion required, by the command of the General Aſſembly or Gemot; and ſo far was the chief Magiſtrate from having any authority in this reſpect, that as long as our anceſtors remained in *Germany*, he was himſelf occaſionally choſen by the ſame aſſembly, that gave orders for this Militia to march; but when the *Saxons* came over into this iſland, and the office of principal Magiſtrate thro' the neceſſity of affairs, from temporary became perpetual, the power of the Militia ſtill

continued

continued in the ſame hands; the King indeed went in and out before his People, and led them to battle; but he could not legally call them out into ſervice without the common conſent; and though on ſome urgent and extraordinary events the uſual forms of government in thoſe ſimple ages might be omitted, and the People confiding in their Prince might come forth at his ſole motion to defend their Country; yet this they did upon conſideration of the neceſſity, not from any opinion of the right; once a year they were conſtantly muſtered; and when they went to war, they collected themſelves together in thoſe little bodies, called Decennaries, and thereby each man fought in the ſight of his Relations or Aſſociates: their rule of Diſcipline was ſtrict; it was not however ſettled at the diſcretion of the Prince, but by the orders of the general Gemot.

At length, however, when the Feodal Tenures came to be grafted on the old *Saxon* conſtitution, another ſpecies of Militia was then in vogue, more acceptable to Princes of an arbitrary turn of mind than the former, as being more ſubject to their commands; this may be termed the Feodal Militia, to diſtinguiſh

it from the other, which I call the *Saxon* or National.

It is not neceſſary to my preſent purpoſe to conſider how or at what time theſe Tenures firſt took their riſe; or by what means they came to be ſo univerſal; it is ſufficient to ſay, that during the reigns of the firſt *Norman* Kings they were at their greateſt height; of theſe Tenures, Knights-ſervice was the principal; all who held by this, were ſubject by the law of Property to certain military Duties, and were under the command of the Crown, not ſo much as King of the Realm, as the great Lord Paramount of the Fee. In the time of the Conqueror they who held by Knights-ſervice, were more than ſixty thouſand; for that martial Prince having got the greateſt part of the national property into his hands under the pretence of confiſcation, granted it out as a reward to his Barons; and they again ſubdivided it among their followers, ſubject always to the obligation of attending their Lords in the Wars. He even obliged the Eccleſiaſtical Fees to ſubmit to theſe kinds of ſervice: this ſpecies of Militia is ſo generally underſtood, that a ſhort deſcription

deſcription of it will be ſufficient—When the King called on his Barons, they attended, and brought under their Banners all who held any military Fee under them; who were by Law obliged to be conſtantly furniſhed with a proper portion of arms; theſe were the common ſoldiers; and the officers were certain Retainers, men who were particularly devoted to the perſon of their Lords; who lived in their houſes, and ſubſiſted by their bounty: thus every regiment was a ſort of family, of which the Baron was both Leader and Maſter; all were obliged to a ſervice of forty days at their own expence; and if they continued longer in the field, the King was to pay them; and whenever any one (as being a minor, or through any other inability) could not ſerve in perſon, the King had poſſeſſion of the Fee, and appointed a ſubſtitute in his ſtead: there were others beſides theſe, who held lands under the obligation of protecting the borders of the Kingdom towards *Scotland* and *Wales*, whenever they were invaded; and others who held a Tenure, called *Caſtle-guard*, becauſe they were bound

to the defence of ſome particular Fortreſs in caſe of a ſiege.

Thus the Crown had got an Army at its diſpoſal, which it could call out as often, though not for ſo long a continuance, as it deſired; and future Princes might hereby have rendered themſelves abſolute, if the firſt *William* had not been guilty of one fortunate miſtake, by dividing the ſhares of Property into too large parcels, making his Barons thereby ſo powerful, as to enable them frequently to refuſe their ſervices both to himſelf and his ſucceſſors, and by that means to reſiſt their oppreſſions.

But the Power of the Crown over this Militia cannot be urged as an argument in favour of the ſame claim over any other ſpecies; ſince the perſons, of whom this conſiſted, were bound to theſe duties, not as Subjects, but as Tenants; not as Freemen, but as Dependants; not from any principle of the Conſtitution, but only by the Law of Tenures; as Tenants, they were diſtrained if they omitted their duty; and as Tenants, they freed themſelves from any further obligation, by quitting their Fee; they held their lands by way of payment for

for what they did; and their poſſeſſions were termed " Beneficia" Rewards: Militias of this ſort are allowed of in the moſt abſolute governments; ſuch are at preſent the Zaims and Timariots of the *Turkiſh* Empire; what inference can, therefore, be drawn from all this, that can in the leaſt relate to the preſent queſtion, unleſs it be, that the ill uſe which Kings of an arbitrary diſpoſition endeavoured to make of this body of men, too clearly proves, that ſuch a power could never yet be entruſted for any ſpace of time in thoſe hands under any right or pretence whatſoever, without ſome danger ariſing to the conſtitution?

For theſe Tenures (which ought not to be conſidered as part of the original frame of our Government, but rather as an evil excreſcence from it) proved for a long time a heavy Burden to the Freedom of this Country, and almoſt cauſed its Deſtruction; to theſe are to be imputed all the arbitrary Acts that were performed by ſucceeding Kings for two or three centuries; under pretence of theſe, illegal Taxes were exacted, and oppreſſive courts were erected. The tenure itſelf is however totally now taken away by ſtatute,

ſtatute, and all its ill effects have periſhed with it.

As this new kind of Militia was the favourite of the Crown, the *Saxon* or National lay for ſome time very much neglected: we have, however, ſome diſtant traces of it in the time of *Henry* the Second, and *Henry* the Third, when certain Aſſizes or Aſſeſſments of Arms were made, which determined the particular portion that each man was to have according to his poſſeſſions: but the firſt mention we meet thereof in our Statutes is in the thirteenth year of *Edward* the Firſt, when it was enacted, "That all Natives ſhould be armed "that were between the ages of fifteen "years and forty; they who had fifteen "Pounds a year in land, or forty Marks "in goods, were to keep by them the Arms "of a Horſeman; and they the whole of "whoſe poſſeſſions were inferior to twenty "Marks, were not to be without their "Sword and Battle-ax to defend their "country."—Conſtables were to be choſen twice every year, who in their reſpective Hundreds were to have the inſpection of Arms, and to preſent Defaulters; and we

are

are told at the beginning of this Statute, that this was no new Law or Inſtitution, but all was done " according to the ancient " Aſſize."

But when *Edward* the Second ſucceeded his Father on the Throne, among the many other irregularities of his Government, he ſeems to have uſurped a greater power over this Militia than the Law allowed him; for at the re-ſettlement of the Government in the firſt year of his Succeſſor *Edward* the Third, the Parliament again declared, that no one ſhould be compelled to arm himſelf, but as the Cuſtom was in former times; and the latter part of this Statute contains ſomething neceſſary for our obſervation; for it is there enacted, " that none " ſhall be diſtrained to go out of their " Counties" (I uſe the words of the Statute roll) " unleſs becauſe of the neceſſity of the " ſudden coming of ſtrange Enemies in- " to the Realm :" So that though the Parliament did hereby impower the King to call out the militia on an urgent occaſion; yet they ſhewed, that they would themſelves be " judges of that occaſion," and that no original Right or Power of that nature was in the Crown, but ſuch only as they

they were pleaſed to allow it; and ſo cautious were they in this reſpect, that they would not let "neceſſity in general" ſtand as the Foundation of this Grant, but they were reſolved to explain "this neceſſity" themſelves.—It ſhould be only "the coming of foreign Enemies into the Realm;" ſo that it did not relate "to domeſtic "Troubles or Rebellion;"—it ſhould alſo be "the ſudden coming;" ſo that probably the Invaſion muſt be actual, before they could be drawn out of their Counties, and not the apprehenſion of it only;—it muſt not be of public notoriety, or of which any preceding Information could be obtained; for in ſuch caſe the ordinary courſe of Parliament muſt be taken: and as a proof of this, we find that two Acts were paſſed in this Reign expreſſly for calling out the Militia on two particular occaſions; ſometimes the Parliament would confine theſe arrays to the Counties on this ſide the *Humber*; and ſometimes to thoſe adjoining to the ſea; and ſo tenacious were our Anceſtors of all their legal Rights, that we find them again inſiſting on this ſame Doctrine in the twenty-fifth year of this Reign, and very particularly diſtinguiſhing the difference of

authority, which the Crown could legally exerciſe over the Feodal or over the National Militia.

When this great King was gone to reſt, his Grandſon *Richard* the Second ſucceeded to the Crown, a Prince unlike his Predeceſſor in every Regal Accompliſhment, but much reſembling the ſecond *Edward* both in failings and fate; like him alſo he ſeems to have tranſgreſſed the bounds the Parliament gave his power over this Militia; ſo that our anceſtors found it neceſſary again to re-aſſert their Rights in this reſpect, and in the fourth year of his Succeſſor *Henry* the Fourth, to re-enact all the preceding Acts of Parliament that relate to it; and the Commons Petition, on which this Statute is grounded, concludes with theſe emphatical words, " that all the Commiſſions and " Writs, made contrary to the ſaid Statutes " (concerning the Militia), and all the In- " dictments and Accuſations, Obligations " and Ties made by Colour of the ſaid " Commiſſions and Writs, with all the De- " pendings and Circumſtances thereto be- " longing, be cancelled, revoked, quaſhed, " and diſannulled for ever, as things made

" againſt Law, and that they may not be " taken for example in time to come."— With what free and bold expreſſions does this Parliament teach us to aſſert our own Rights, and to take care that, from any timid acquieſcence of ours, no ill conſequence ſhould ariſe, that may affect the Freedom of our Poſterity?

I find little to our preſent purpoſe in the ſeveral following Reigns:—*Henry* the Fifth was conſtantly engaged in Foreign Conqueſts, and all his ſucceſſors to *Henry* the Seventh, in civil Contentions, in neither of which the national Militia could have any concern; the Annals, therefore, of theſe times are totally ſilent about it:—Neither will *Henry* the Seventh, who ſucceeded to theſe troubleſome days, afford us much matter on this head; the ancient Laws remained unaltered, though the execution of them was not greatly, perhaps, regarded. This King was of too arbitrary a turn of mind to be fond of national Militia: every part of the Conſtitution was declining apace, and *Henry*, and all his deſcendants of the family of *Tudor*, made too frequent infringements upon it; troops of this ſort were beginning

ginning now indeed to be unfaſhionable in *Europe*; *Lewis* the Eleventh had lately eſtabliſhed a ſtanding force in *France*; and *Henry*, who had ſpent his days of exile in that part of the world, had learnt from thence, how unfit a conſtitutional Militia was for the illegal purpoſes of Prerogative; he endeavoured therefore to conſtitute a new ſpecies of his own, and having ſold variety of Annuities, and granted great numbers of Patents, he got the Parliament twice in his reign to declare, that all his Annuitants and Patentees were obliged, by reaſon and duty, to attend him to his wars, whenſoever or whereſoever he called upon them; and his People ſeem to have been glad to be quit with him by this conceſſion only, whoſe arbitrary views, from the wording of the Preambles of theſe Statutes, appear to have extended much farther; but as it is not probable that theſe his Penſioners could form any conſiderable ſtrength, the chief uſe, which this avaricious Prince made of theſe Acts, was to fleece his own creatures under pretence of Fines and Compoſitions: theſe Statutes, however, continued no longer in force than his Life.

The next material particular that concerns the Militia, we meet within the Reign of Queen *Mary*, in the fourth year of which we find that a new aſſeſſment of Arms was made upon the People according to their Poſſeſſions; that, which had been made ſo long ago as the thirteenth of *Edward* the Firſt, remained ſtill in force; the proportions of it were, however, become very unequal, as Property had ſince that time very much increaſed in value, and paſſed through various alterations. This laſt Aſſeſſment purſued the ſame plan as the former, and aſſeſſed not only the Poſſeſſors of Lands, but alſo of Goods, and went ſo low, that he, whoſe wealth exceeded not the value of Ten Pounds in Chattels, was comprehended in it; but this Statute, by reaſon of the too great proportions which it impoſed, laſted not long; for, in the firſt year of *James* the Firſt, it was repealed; and, by the twenty-fifth of the ſame King, the thirteenth of *Edward* the Firſt was alſo taken away.

So that this Species of a Militia ſeems by theſe repeals to have been wholly extinguiſhed; and though that great obligation (which every member of ſociety muſt al-

ways be under, and which was one of the firſt principles of our Conſtitution), of being obliged to defend the Community, whenever it was attacked, could not but ſtill ſubſiſt; yet as no poſitive Law was left to direct the ſubject in what manner he was to give his aſſiſtance; the whole remained in confuſion and uncertainty, and from hence in part aroſe that variety of opinions on this head, and thoſe unhappy Contentions, which we meet with in the ſucceeding Reign.

When, however, I look back upon the ſhort account I have been able to collect of thoſe kinds of Militia, that have been eſtabliſhed in this country, I cannot help at the ſame time but acknowledge, that ſome of the worſt of our Kings did but very imperfectly conform to the rules that were preſcribed to them in this reſpect; and I am conſcious, that ſome Writs or Commiſſions may, perhaps, be produced to prove that they ſometimes exerciſed an abſolute power over the Militia; but theſe, if they are not founded on ſome law, ſhew only what they did, not what they ought to have done; and are proofs not of a Right, but a Uſurpation. Our Conſtitution was always free, but the power of the Crown was not always

always ſufficiently circumſcribed; Parliaments did not always ſpeak in ſo loud a tone as at preſent, and Kings would ſometimes ſpeak in a louder; and in the intervals of the former they would order out illegal Writs, which can be conſidered only as the declarations of the Crown; and that ought not, I am ſure, to be judge in its own concern; and as no Statute can be found on which theſe writs can be eſtabliſhed, we may fairly conclude with the honeſt Commons in the reign of *Henry* the Fourth, "that all ſuch are null for ever as made againſt Law, and ought not to be taken for example in time to come;" the frequent tranſgreſſions of Kings againſt theſe Militia Laws, obliged our Anceſtors, as we have ſhewn, ſo frequently to re-enact them; this, however, does not impair their credit.—The force of Magna Charta is by no means diminiſhed, though repeated Uſurpations obliged the People to inſiſt more than thirty times on its confirmation.

From what has been ſaid I may be permitted, I hope, to conclude,—that the Conſtitutional Defence of this nation has always conſiſted of its own Natives, drawn into the field, either as their Tenures obliged them,

or

or as the Parliament directed;—and that the people were formerly by law obliged to be armed, ſo far were they from having their Arms by Law taken from them—that the Feodal Militia was properly the Army of the King, the National Militia was the Army of the Kingdom; over the firſt the power of the Crown was conſiderable; over the latter it had originally and abſolutely no power, but ſuch only as the Parliament was pleaſed to allow it; who, in the caſe of calling that Militia into ſervice, were always judges of the occaſion;—and laſtly, that the National Militia met with encouragement or not, as the reigning monarch was well or ill-intentioned towards his People: the firſt and third *Edwards*, (Princes whoſe memories will ever be revered, the one as the *Juſtinian* of this Country, the other as its moſt accompliſhed Warrior) always favoured and encouraged it; while *Edward* the Second and *Richard* the Second (thoſe rivals in brutal luſts, folly, and oppreſſion,) uſurped upon the Rights of this body, and rendered ineffectual thoſe good Statutes, which were paſſed for its preſervation.

Permit me alſo here to make one farther obſervation on the care our Anceſtors took

to

to keep this country in a ſtate of defence: various Statutes were paſſed to prevent the exportation of Horſes, others for the improvement of the breed, and to oblige perſons of property to keep always a certain number by them;—the price alſo of bows was determinately fixed by Law; the Makers of them were obliged to have never leſs than fifty made ready in their ſhops; and the materials of which they were formed were appointed by Parliament as a ſort of Toll, without a certain quantity of which no Tun of Merchandiſe could from ſome countries be imported into this Kingdom; and as much as our Progenitors are famed for ſometimes indulging their genius, a Butt of *Malmſey* could not find its way into their cellars, without a ſheaf of arrows for its paſſport.

I paſs now from the hiſtory of ancient Militias, to give ſome account of that which was eſtabliſhed in their ſtead at the Reſtoration; the Favourers of the undue Prerogative of the Crown in this reſpect, lay great ſtreſs on the Preamble of the Militia Act paſſed at that time, which ſays, "that the "power of the Militia is ſolely and abſolutely "in the King, and that neither Houſe of "Parlia-

" Parliament can or ought to pretend to the " ſame, or can lawfully wage any war either " offenſive or defenſive againſt the Crown;" —and to give the greater weight to this argument, much has been ſaid of the wiſdom of that Parliament which enacted it, and of the great characters of the Earls of *Clarendon* and *Southampton*, who had then the principal direction of affairs:—It will be neceſſary therefore to conſider the temper both of this Parliament, and of the perſons who bore the greateſt ſway in it, that we may know, how far we ought to rely on their opinions.

This Parliament, (to which the diſgraceful name of Penſionary was given) met firſt in the year 1661, and falſely imputing to the principle of reſiſtance the preceding confuſions, which were chiefly owing to the unreaſonable paſſions and humours of ſome of thoſe who reſiſted, run violently into the contrary extreme; and by their Laws did not leave the People a poſſibility of withſtanding any arbitrary Encroachments againſt their Privileges, whenever they ſhould have cauſe to do it. I need not enter into a long deduction of facts to prove this:—

beſides the above recited Preamble, the Oaths and Teſts which were then enacted, are ſufficient teſtimonies of it; and *Algernon Sidney* allows the conduct of this Parliament to be an unhappy proof, that bodies of this ſort may ſometimes err; and even at the time it ſat, ſome were bold enough to declare, "that no Conveyancer could in more com-"pendious Terms have drawn a diſſettlement "of the whole Birthright of England."

In the firſt Seſſion of this Parliament this Militia Bill paſſed; it was not, however, without oppoſition, as too much favouring the principle of Non-reſiſtance; Mr. *Finch*, the Attorney-General, chiefly promoted it; it does not appear, that Lord *Clarendon* took any particular part in it; neither ought the ſentiments of a man, who had acted through the whole civil wars as a partiſan on the ſide of two encroaching monarchs, to be much regarded in a queſtion of prerogative; it is certain, however, that Lord *Southampton* objected to ſome parts of this Bill; this was one of thoſe things, in which he checked the over-haſty zeal of that froward Aſſembly, and ſhewed he could be a good ſervant of the Crown without betraying the Rights

of

of the People; he moved himſelf for an amendment in the Militia Oath (which contains the very ſame ſenſe as the latter part of the Preamble expreſſed in terms perhaps leſs exceptionable) as too much encouraging Arbitrary Pretenſions in the Crown; and though Lord *Angleſey* and a majority oppoſed this amendment; yet it ſerves to ſhew, what opinion this noble Patriot entertained of that Teſt, and implies alſo what he thought of the Preamble; and even they who ſpoke againſt this alteration of the Oath, did not preſume to argue againſt the Principle upon which it was propoſed; but urged, that the Nation would neceſſarily underſtand the Oath in the ſenſe of the Amendment, though the words remained unaltered.

Many years did not paſs before this Houſe of Lords, who had thus rejected the opinion of their illuſtrious Member, ſeemed to repent of their own Act, and paſſed another Militia Bill (which went alſo through the Lower Houſe) founded on very different principles, and placing the command thereof not in the ſame hands as the former, wherein they had paid ſo little attention to

the prerogative of the Crown in this reſpect, that *Charles* the Second refuſed to paſs it, "becauſe (as he himſelf expreſſed it) he "ſhould thereby be deprived of a power, "which he would never conſent to part with, "even for half an hour."

We have already obſerved that the Affair of the Militia was very much neglected at the Revolution, and have ſhewn the reaſons of it: the univerſal conduct however of the nation upon that event, ſhews clearly, that it was their opinion, that the power of arming the People was not ſo entirely in the Crown, but that they might, as the laſt reſource, take up even offenſive Arms againſt it; and we are not indeed wholly without a ſort of parliamentary Deciſion in this particular; for by the firſt of *William* and *Mary* the Oath which declares it "to be illegal "to take up arms againſt any one commiſ-"ſioned by the King," was repealed as unconſtitutional; and as this Oath contains the ſame ſenſe as the latter part of the Preamble; and as the former part of this laſt tends in the event to render any reſiſtance to the moſt arbitrary oppreſſions impracticable, I ſhall leave it to the impartial to determine, how

how far the credit of the whole ought to be affected by this repeal.—The laſt time the neceſſity of a new Militia law was conſidered by the public was juſt after the treaty of *Ryſwick*; when a long foreign war being ended, and the nation reſtored to peace, it was thought a proper opportunity to plan ſuch a ſcheme, and it was moſt ardently wiſhed for by all, who were of a true conſtitutional ſpirit; but the Court, who then foreſaw that a neceſſity would from thence ariſe of diſbanding a greater part of the ſtanding army than was agreeable to it, prevented this wiſe deſign from taking effect; it appears, however, by ſome excellent tracts upon this queſtion, publiſhed at that time, that it was the opinion of the Patriots of that Age, that the ſole power granted to the Crown over the Militia by the 12th of *Charles* the Second, was contrary to the firſt Principles of our Conſtitution, and ought in a new Bill to be veſted in other hands.

Lay, therefore, all theſe arguments together—The Hiſtory of ancient Militias;—The declaration of ſeveral Parliaments before the Reſtoration—The peculiar conjuncture in which the Preamble of this Militia Act

Act was formed—The temper of the Aſſembly which enacted it—The opinion of the Earl of *Southampton*, which has been moſt relied on, though not truly repreſented in this point—And, laſt of all, what can be collected of the ſentiments of ſubſequent Parliaments and wiſe men ſince that period—And then judge, whether all theſe ought not to outweigh the ſole Preamble of an Act paſſed in a Parliament, which for its ſervile compliances with the Crown has been ſtiled the Penſionary, and whether on ſuch a foundation alone the Legiſlature of this Kingdom ought to be deprived of a power, which cannot be lodged in other hands with any permanent ſecurity to the Conſtitution?

Reaſon, indeed, might alone convince us of the expediency of what I defend; for as the perfection of every well-conſtituted Society conſiſts in the freedom and independence of the Legiſlative Body, it is eaſy to conjecture, that ſuch a Body could not be free, and could not be abſolute maſters of their own determinations, who ſhould transfer the Power of the Sword out of their own hands into thoſe of any other, whoſe temper would indeed be too mild to oppreſs them,

but

but on whoſe Mercy they muſt depend for protection.

One farther conſideration has been urged on this occaſion, which can never, however, with propriety be mentioned where the power of the Crown is debated, and that is, the CHARACTER OF THE EXCELLENT PERSON who wears it; — the love of ſuch a Monarch might induce a Loyal People to reſign their Rights, if he had not too much virtue to accept them; not a wiſh for power has appeared in any one action of his Reign; his ſubjects could not deſire to be more free than he would have them; he has ſhewn himſelf fully ſatisfied with the lawful Authority of a Britiſh King, whoſe peculiar happineſs it is, that, to do good, his power is without bounds;—to do wrong, he has conſtitutionally no power; ſo that in a political ſenſe he may truly be ſaid, to be bleſſed with the knowledge of Good, without being curſt with that of Evil; whoever, therefore, would put him in a capacity of knowing the latter, is ſo far from being a friend to his Prince, that he is his great Enemy and Seducer; one who would drive him from his ſtate of innocence and perfection,

ſection, and rob the Crown of its moſt diſtinguiſhing Prerogative; which makes it more ſecure and glorious to him that wears it than that of any abſolute monarchy can be.

The ſecond objection that has been made to the propoſed ſcheme was, "that it would "alter the diſpoſitions of the people of this "Country — check the vein and inclina- "tion they ſhew at preſent towards com- "merce and manufactures—and convert a "rich and peaceable nation into a military, "and perhaps ſeditious people;"—I ſhall conſider what opinion former precedents and reaſon would inſtruct us to entertain on this point.

There is ſomething in the conſtitution of every abſolute monarchy that prevents its making any very conſiderable progreſs in Trade; in ſuch States the enjoyment of property is too precarious; but I think it undeniable, that the Commerce of *Spain* and *France* arrived at the greateſt height, of which the nature of ſuch governments is capable, at the ſame time that the diſpoſitions of their people were moſt turned to war; and that the military and commercial glories of each Nation were nearly at

their meridian together:—when *Spain* produced the beſt ſoldiers in *Europe*, and her aim was Univerſal Empire, her commerce was alſo extenſive; the ſame ſpirit made her both brave and induſtrious, gave Courage to her Armies, and Life to her Manufactures, extended her dominions on the European Continent, and ſent her to unknown climes in ſearch of new wealth and new poſſeſſions;—but when the glory of her arms was extinguiſhed, her Commerce alſo decayed, and ſhe became at once both lazy and unwarlike; from the time of the Pyrenean Treaty, *France* gained the aſcendant in power, and at the ſame time received, as it were, from her rival an inclination towards trade; the chief paſſion of her Natives ſeemed then to be martial glory, and her armies were more numerous than thoſe of any other Nation; and yet, during this conjuncture, for the ſpace of about forty years, ſhe made her largeſt advances in Trade.——I enter not into the reaſons of this at preſent; the fact alone is ſufficient to prove, that a military ſpirit and a commercial diſpoſition have ſometimes met in the ſame People.

But, if we caſt our eyes on the annals of Free States, which are more properly the nurſeries of Commerce; we ſhall find the above truth illuſtrated in a ſtronger manner; no Country ever made in a few years ſo great a progreſs in Trade as the United Provinces; their ſhipping was at one time computed to be more than what belonged to all the reſt of *Europe* put together; and yet their Wealth and Commerce increaſed in this prodigious manner, while they were engaged in a war of fifty years continuance in the heart of their own country; while moſt of their trading towns were Fortreſſes, garriſoned by Burghers, and while the natives of this Republic, from eighteen years of age to ſixty, were obliged by the Union of *Utrecht*, to be armed and trained; but ſince this firſt eſtabliſhed Militia has been neglected; ſince they truſted their defence to Foreign Mercenaries; and ſince of late they have hardly been defended at all; their Commerce has been gradually on the decline. Sir *William Temple* obſerves, that in his time it was paſt its meridian; and ſome approaching period perhaps may ſhew both this and their power ſetting together.

Whoever

Whoever alſo has but curſorily peruſed the Hiſtory of our own Country muſt have obſerved, that thoſe reigns, in which the martial ſpirit of our People has moſt appeared, have been no leſs diſtinguiſhed by the advances, that were then made in Commerce;—I ſhall inſtance only in the reign of *Edward* the the Third, when *Scotland*, *France*, and *Spain*, felt the ſucceſsful efforts of our Arms; when the National Militia was in vogue, often trained, and frequently called into ſervice; when the Legiſlature thought it an object worthy their attention, and paſſed ſeveral laws in its favour,—and what part of our annals can produce more good Statutes in ſupport of trade? Or, did Commerce at any time take larger ſtrides towards perfection?—This cannot be better proved, than by obſerving, that in the twenty-eighth year of this King, our Exports were to our Imports, as more than Seven to One; this was a ſurpriſing Balance of Trade in our favour; and ſhews that our Manufactures muſt at that time have been in a flouriſhing condition, that our people were by no means idle, and that their Military Accompliſhments, which they were ready at all times to exert in the

ſervice of the public, proved no obſtruction to the attention they otherwiſe paid to their domeſtic occupations.

But we need not enter into a long deduction of hiſtorical facts to prove this; ſince Reaſon, a better guide, will teach us, that a certain degree of Military ſtrength in a nation is abſolutely neceſſary, as well for the Encouragement as the Preſervation of Trade. Commerce loves ſecurity, not ſuch as can ariſe from the protection of another, but ſuch as places the power in her own hands; and on which ſhe can fully depend.——No one will labour to "have," if he is not certain he ſhall be able to "hold."——A precarious poſſeſſion would be but a bad encouragement to dangerous voyages and painful occupations; and no Merchant will with zeal and pleaſure apply himſelf to Trade, unleſs he has a good opinion of the wiſdom and conduct of the ſtate, that is to ſecure his acquiſitions;—that it is eſtabliſhed on foundations which cannot eaſily be ſhaken, nor conſequently in danger of any ſudden Revolution; and as he requires good Laws to protect him from domeſtic oppreſſions, ſo muſt he no

leſs

leſs have a well-conſtituted internal force to ſecure him from foreign invaſions.

Beſides, we may allow ſome degree of reaſonable ambition to every honeſt Trader; which ſtimulates him in his profeſſion, by the hopes he entertains of being qualified, by means of his acquiſitions, to bear a ſhare one time or other in the government of his Country; but if ſuch a State is deſpicable abroad, and defenceleſs at home, how much muſt this laudable ſting and encouragement be diminiſhed, when the Government, by its ill conduct, is got below his ambition, and when, long before the happy period of his pre-eminence can arrive, his Country and his own poſſeſſions may have periſhed together?

And if an internal Force was ever neceſſary for the ſupport of Trade, it is now more particularly ſo, when our numerous and diſtant Colonies demand the protection of our Navies—when our Commerce is vulnerable in more parts than it was formerly, and our Fleets muſt leave the head of our dominion, whoſe defence was once their only occupation, to repel every attack that may be made on the exterior parts of it;

it;—they can no longer parade it in our channel alone; the moſt diſtant coaſts of the world demand their ſervice; and experience convinces us of the neceſſity of this dilemma, either that we muſt eſtabliſh an internal Conſtitutional Force for the Defence of our own Country, and ſend forth our Fleets for the Protection of our Colonies, or keep our Navy at home for the preſervation of the former, and leave the latter an eaſy prey to the firſt enemy that ſhall ſeize upon them.

Allow, however, for once, the objection its full force,——" that ſuch an inſtitution " would check the commercial diſpoſition " of our people."——But would it in ſuch a caſe be wiſe to riſk the enjoyment of a ſufficiency with ſafety, for the ſake of ſome trifling acquiſition? Shall we give up our ſecurity, which was the principal motive of our entering into ſociety, for the intereſt of our Commerce, which is only the embelliſhment of it? Was not the deſign of Riches and Trade, to enable a community the better to preſerve its independence? And ſhall we, therefore, cultivate the means to that extravagant degree, as abſolutely to deſtroy

the end, for which they were eſtabliſhed; if we leave our Country defenceleſs, the more rich it grows, it becomes the more deſireable morſel, and tempts, as it were, its enemies to deſtroy it; Huſbandmen and Artificers muſt turn Soldiers, when the conteſt is, who ſhall have the land and merchandiſe; and though *Plato* and *Ariſtotle* have juſtly blamed *Lycurgus* for having inſtilled too martial a ſpirit into the Laws of his Republic; yet they would certainly have paſſed no leſs a cenſure on that Lawgiver, who ſhould frame the wiſeſt inſtitutions to make a People free and wealthy, without eſtabliſhing a proper force for the ſecurity of thoſe Enjoyments.

But this objection farther urges, "that, "if ſuch an Inſtitution was neceſſary againſt "foreign Invaſions; yet by arming the Peo- "ple, they will be made ſeditious, and "of courſe become dangerous to the inter- "nal frame of the Government."—I ſee plainly from whence this apprehenſion firſt aroſe;—Perſons, who peruſe the hiſtory of this Country, but who from an ignorance of its Laws enter not ſufficiently into the ſpirit of its Inſtitutions, have built this

objection

objection on the civil diſſenſions which the Barons were once able to raiſe by means of the Feodal Militia; but it is certain that the People were not as principals concerned in thoſe Wars: not they, but the Barons were ſeditious; they fought indeed for their reſpective Lords whenever they called upon them; but it was not from any ſpirit of Rebellion: it was, becauſe the Law of Tenures commanded, and the neceſſity of ſubſiſtence obliged them; they were ſometimes indeed in a moſt unhappy Dilemma, when the Law of the Crown called them one way, and the obligation of their Fees another; this inconvenience, however, ought not to be conſidered as the ill effect of a Militia; but becauſe the command of it was lodged in improper hands: this I allow to be a point of moſt ſerious conſequence.—As ſuch, I have treated it in the former part of this Diſcourſe,—In the propoſed Plan the command is given to thoſe, who can never uſe it to the deſtruction of their Country; over this Militia no undue or dangerous influence can ever be gained; the parts, of which it conſiſts, will be perpetually changing; it is abſurd therefore to argue againſt

againſt a thing in general, becauſe a particular ſpecies of it has, through a defect in the inſtitution, been converted to illegal purpoſes; the moſt ſacred things have ſometimes been abuſed; and it would be childiſh to impute to any inſtrument the ill effects that may be produced by it, when a madman has got it into his poſſeſſion.

Look through the Annals of the World, and ſee if any one inſtance of a Militia can be produced, that was ſeditious of itſelf, or of a People, who, when the ſword was put into their hands, converted it to their own deſtruction.—Free States have almoſt always been ſubject to commotions, and the ſame have generally been defended by a Militia; but that the Military Eſtabliſhments of ſuch a People were the cauſe of their commotions can never be proved;—the Republic of *Carthage* is a ſingular inſtance of a free people, that owed their defence to mercenary ſoldiers; and yet ſhe was nevertheleſs fertile in diſſenſions;—and though *Rome* had as many Soldiers as Citizens, though her Senators and Plebeians had frequent conteſts for power, where the Balance was unequally adjuſted, yet her

People, when in the greateſt fury, and when driven by injuſtice almoſt to deſpair, never once had recourſe to arms; they urged their claims by ſupplications and ſeceſſions; and though diſciplined and ready at all times to take up arms in the defence of their Country, they never lifted up a hand againſt it; for ſeveral centuries not a life was loſt amidſt all their Contentions; and it was not until the nature of their armies was changed, until their legions received pay, were tranſported into diſtant Provinces, and never ſuffered to return to their domeſtic Occupations; in a word, not until the honeſt Militia-Men of *Rome* were changed into Standing Forces, that their conteſts blazed out into civil wars deſtructive to the Commonwealth.

The Miſeries and Oppreſſions, which ſome States have ſuffered from the common ſort of armies, have made many abſurdly apprehenſive, that a Firelock or a red Coat muſt neceſſarily alter the diſpoſition of the perſons who have them; they do not obſerve, that theſe evils have ariſen from ſuch only, who have made war their profeſſion; it is the idle and diſſolute man-

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ner of living, that alone debauches the Soldier's inclination, when without home, without induſtry, and without occupation he muſt ſubſiſt either by pay or by plunder; Armies compoſed of ſuch as theſe have ſometimes enſlaved a Nation under pretence of doing themſelves juſtice; our Hiſtory furniſhes a remarkable inſtance of this kind, which ſhews clearly what it is that converts a Soldier into a Rebel, and makes him dangerous to his Country. As gallant an army as this Nation ever ſaw, and which at the ſame time was particularly ſtiled the *Modeſt* and *Self-denying*, conſiſted of the Youths of *London*, who, though unuſed to arms and drawn in haſte out of Town, gave ſignal proof of Courage through the whole Civil Wars, and at laſt defeated the Royal Army by one deciſive blow at *Naſeby:* If this Army of the Parliament, after they had done the buſineſs for which they were called out, had been ſent back to their Trades, and had only been made uſe of, as there was occaſion for them, they would then have been in the nature of a Militia, and there would have been no

danger to have apprehended from them—but by keeping them for ſeveral years conſtantly in the field, after the war was over, by training them to idleneſs, and making them forget their Trades, and depriving them of the common methods of ſubſiſtence, they were made not at all the better Soldiers, but became the worſe Citizens; their diſpoſitions were totally perverted; their modeſty changed to preſumption; they grew imperious and ſeditious; they refuſed to go to *Ireland*, though they were commanded; neither would they be diſbanded, though the Parliament had no other occaſion for their ſervice,—they petitioned — they remonſtrated — they rebelled —and at length deſtroyed the Authority of that Parliament which at firſt called them forth, and had performed ſuch wonders by their aſſiſtance.

I ſhall here, therefore, reſt this point, and will only obſerve, that whatever force there is in this laſt Objection, it muſt hold univerſally againſt every ſpecies of Militia; for if the people by being armed will be made idle and ſeditious (and without arming them

them to ſome degree, no Militia, I am ſure, can be eſtabliſhed) it will be a reaſon againſt every other Plan that ſhall be offered; and they who urge it, muſt be againſt the principle of a Militia itſelf, or they do not fully comprehend the force of their own arguments; and when they accuſe thoſe as guilty of calumny, who on this account aſſert, that they are againſt that Conſtitutional Principle, they ſhould conſider whether they are not themſelves in fact the calumniators, and whether their own words do not convict them of the reproach, which they ſo much dread from the tongues of others.

The next Objection that I have heard urged againſt a Conſtitutional Force of this ſort is, "That it is not practicable in this "country;" let any one reflect that almoſt all the ancient Governments, and even this Kingdom, was once defended by a Militia; let him alſo obſerve, that ſome nations owe at preſent their protection to it; and he will need no other argument to convince him, that *England* cannot be ſo peculiarly unfortunate, as to be alone incapable

capable of ſuch an inſtitution ; Abſolute Monarchies would be glad of ſuch a defence ; but they ſeldom have it, becauſe they dare not truſt it ; the freedom however of this nation particularly fits it for a Militia ; and ſhall we then reject an advantage, which the nature of our Government has given us over moſt of the other ſtates of *Europe ?* But it will be ſaid, perhaps, that it is only meant, " that the preſent Plan is *impracti-* " *cable*"—Let a better then be propoſed. ——I argue not ſo much for particular ſchemes as for general Principles ;—or let them aſſign ſome reaſons for this objection ; I never heard but one, which was, " *that* " *the gentlemen of the country would not at-* " *tend to the execution of it :*" I own, I have a better opinion of my countrymen ; and I am ſure, the Impatience they have ſhewn for ſuch an eſtabliſhment is a conſiderable preſumption in their favour ; and if they ſhould at length diſappoint our expectations, they will ſhew themſelves unworthy our conſtitution, and diſqualified for a ſtate of liberty ; and having thus failed in a point ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary for the ſecurity

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of a free Government, we had better openly at once reſign it;—but if they ſhould in ſome few particulars neglect their duty, the propoſed Scheme has provided an adjutant and forty ſerjeants to each battalion; who are to be conſtantly paid and employed in training the men that are under them; theſe will probably be found alone ſufficient for that purpoſe; and are not many leſs, perhaps, than contribute in reality to the diſcipline of any one battalion in our ſervice; and as to the ſpirit of theſe ruſtic officers, when called into the field, I cannot think that the love of liberty, and the love of their country, are yet become ſuch antiquated notions, and are ſo entirely foreign to their breaſts, that they will not animate their conduct in the ſame manner, as they once did the conduct of their anceſtors; and that they will not, on a proper occaſion, awake in them that public-ſpirited enthuſiaſm which inflames the mind, and kindles a glow of courage within it, ſuperior to what the weaker motives of intereſt, or even of honour, are able to inſpire; in this reſpect, however, our national

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character would at leaſt make us hope, what nothing but future experience can poſitively determine.

I allow, indeed, that the talents and knowledge which are requiſite to form a great General, muſt be as extenſive as any of which the human mind is capable—but I cannot think that the profeſſion of a common ſoldier requires either much genius or application; the reſt will eaſily be acquired, if courage be not wanting; and as nature has endowed mankind with different degrees of it, ſo nothing contributes more to improve and inflame it, than the hope of rewards and the fear of puniſhments;—the firſt of theſe motives will peculiarly affect the militia-man; the preſervation of whoſe freedom, whoſe freehold, and whoſe family, will be the conſequence and reward of his victories; and if he ſhould not diſcharge his duty in the time of action, he will be liable equally with the common ſoldier to all that the Military Law can inflict; and he will ſuffer the additional puniſhment of the loſs of all his poſſeſſions; for if the public enemy ſhould not happen to ſeize upon them, the enjoyment

ment will ſtill be loſt to him, who muſt quit them through ſhame, or live on them with diſhonour.

If they, who hold the force of ſuch an eſtabliſhment in contempt, would but peruſe the hiſtory of their own country, they would find that the *Britiſh* Militia was always famous for a truly martial ſpirit;—in the battles, where this alone was engaged, a much greater number loſt their lives, than what are ſlain in the leſs bloody encounters of the preſent age, though the engines of war were then by no means ſo deſtructive as at preſent;—can greater diſcipline be ſhewn, than when each man periſhes in his rank? And can we doubt the courage of thoſe armies, whoſe victories were generally ſo complete, that one alone would often prove concluſive in favour of him who obtained it? Is it that the ſpirit of our people is decayed? or are the exerciſes and evolutions of modern armies more difficult than the ancient? or is more genius now required to pull a trigger than formerly to draw a bow-ſtring? Can we no where at preſent find that ſteady perſevering ſpirit,

which ſo much diſtinguiſhed the *London* Militia at the battle of *Newbury?* And where is now that glowing courage, which enabled fifteen hundred men of *Iniſkilling*, almoſt without arms, to defeat ten thouſand regular troops entrenched in a bog, and take their General priſoner?—I may be thought, perhaps, to degrade the military art, when I ſay, that I can ſee no reaſon why a country-fellow may not as eaſily learn to handle his arms as to play at cricket; and why, like this, it may not become his diverſion; the public games of ancient governments conſiſted principally of martial entertainments; and why may not the *Britiſh* Youth amuſe themſelves in playing at ſoldiers, as well as the *Grecian*, the *Roman?*

All the heroic acts, with which the hiſtories of thoſe Commonwealths abound, were performed by Militias; they did not find it impoſſible to diſcipline their own citizens; and yet, if we may believe the modern writers on the art of war, the Tactics of thoſe ſtates had more of genius, and were more refined than the preſent;—

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moſt of the nations alſo of *Europe* were till within theſe three centuries defended by Militias;—and did not *Holland*, when her own citizens were obliged to be trained, defend herſelf againſt the power of *Spain?* Could the arms of *Philip*, conducted by *the genius* of the Prince of *Parma*, ever penetrate far into *her* country? and did not the ſieges of *Harlaem*, *Alcamar*, and *Leyden*, when they were garriſoned only by their own Burghers, break the Spirit of the *Spaniſh* veterans? and yet this very country was over-run, and moſt of her towns taken, in the ſpace of a month, in the year 1672, when the defence thereof was entruſted to 25,000 mercenaries:—It is uſeleſs to cite any more examples;—the very origin of ſtanding forces ſhews, that they were not thought indiſpenſably neceſſary for the defence of a country; they were firſt raiſed to ſuppreſs rebellious ſubjects, to command the unwilling ſubjection of diſtant and oppreſſed provinces—or to extend the conqueſts of ſome aſpiring Prince into diſtant countries, for which he could not legally command the ſervice of the Militia.

I ſhall leave it to perſons who are ſkilled in military knowledge, to determine, whether the preciſe number of days that are appointed by this Plan for the training this Body of Men, is ſufficient;—if they are not, I am ſure they ought to be augmented; and the conſideration of ſome trifling expence, or ſome little loſs in trade, ought not to be put in the balance againſt Security. The rotation, however, that is propoſed, ſeems to be ſo far from being an Objection, that Marſhal *Saxe*, in his Reveries, has deſcribed a method ſomething like this, as the beſt way of recruiting the *French* army; he recommends that the whole People of *France* ſhould be obliged to ſerve for five years by turns; this he thinks would be the moſt probable means of procuring good ſoldiers; neither does he imply the leaſt doubt from the ſhort time which each individual would in ſuch a caſe ſerve, that there would be any defect in the diſcipline of ſuch an army. But I am ſtill more inclined to think, that the Regulations of the propoſed Plan are fully adequate to the purpoſes for which they

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are intended; as they exactly correſpond with the rules of the beſt-regulated Militia, that at preſent ſubſiſts in *Europe*. The regulations of *Switzerland*, and the propoſed Plan, agree in forming the Militia of Part only of the people, and recruiting it out of the remainder.

Both allow Pay in the Time alone of Service, with this only difference, that the *Swiſs* give their Officers double Pay for the firſt month, to enable them to purchaſe their Field-Equipages; and this amendment might not be improperly adopted into our Plan—Both agree in cloathing their Militias in a Uniform—in providing a public Depoſitory for their arms—in exerciſing them after divine Service on *Sundays*—and in teaching them to hit a mark by ſhooting at Butts.

The *Swiſs* have an Officer called a Commiſſioner of Arms; whoſe employment is much the ſame as that of the Adjutant in our Plan;—both are to ride from one Company to another, to ſee that the Men are properly trained, and that they take proper care of their Arms and Accoutrements;—the *Swiſs* have a ſuperior Officer, called a

Grand Major, over every Diſtrict, whoſe employment reſembles that of the Lord-Lieutenants of our Counties; both command the Militia of their reſpective Diviſions—are obliged at certain times to review them—and to ſee that all inferior officers diſcharge their duty.

Upon the whole, the two Plans differ only in a few particulars, in which the *Engliſh* one ſeems to have the advantage.

Four Serjeants are to be appointed to each Company of the *Engliſh* Militia, and are to be veteran Soldiers draughted out of the regular Corps; theſe are to be conſtantly paid, that they may the better attend to the training of the common men;—nothing of this ſort can be found among the *Swiſs* regulations.

The *Swiſs* find their own arms, the *Engliſh* are to be ſupplied by the Public; the latter will probably by this means be better and more uniformly armed. — The *Swiſs* have ſeveral regulations for giving a ſudden alarm in caſe of an unexpected Invaſion, and for calling their Militia on any emergency together; but our happy Situation, as an Iſland, renders all care of this ſort unneceſſary,

unneceſſary, and puts it out of the power of an Enemy to make any conſiderable attempt upon us, without our having notice ſufficient to be prepared for it.

It is by means of ſuch an Inſtitution as this, that the little country of *Switzerland* is able to call together fourſcore thouſand brave men at all times for its defence; and ſo ſmall is the charge of maintaining them, that although the People of this Republic are leſs loaded with Taxes than thoſe of any part of the world beſide, yet they are able to ſave out of their common Revenue a conſiderable ſum of money yearly, which they keep in their Treaſuries againſt any emergent occaſion; and the ſurpriſing acts of valour, which this Militia has performed, have induced an ingenious Writer to draw a parallel between the military Achievements of this little Collection of Cantons, and thoſe of the free States of *Greece*:—He puts in competition with the Battle of *Marathon*, that of *Morgarten*, where 1300 *Swiſs* routed the Army of the Arch-Duke *Leopold*, conſiſting of 20,000 men, and killed twice their own number:—He conſiders the Action of *Sempach*, where the ſame Arch-Duke

Duke loſt his life, and 20,000 of his men were routed by 1600 *Swiſs*, as a more ſurpriſing Victory than that of *Platea*;—and, to crown all, the Battle that was fought in the Paſs of *Weſen*, in the Canton of *Glaris*, is a Copy that exceeds its Original which was fought at *Thermopylæ*: for as 300 *Spartans* tried to repel the army of *Perſia* in thoſe Streights, and all periſhed in the attempt; ſo in ſuch another Defile, 350 *Swiſs* attacked at leaſt 8000 *Auſtrians*, and gained the Field of Battle.—It is ſurpriſing, ſays this Author, what a Spirit the remembrance of this Action inſtils into this People; they yearly celebrate it by a public Proceſſion on the Spot where it was fought; and where eleven Pillars, erected for that purpoſe, ſhew the Places where theſe Heroes eleven times rallied; at each Pillar they offer up Thanks to God, and when they come to the laſt, one of their beſt Orators makes a Panegyric in Praiſe of theſe three hundred and fifty men, and at the end of his Oration reads a Liſt of their Names in the ſame manner as the *Spartans* had the Names of thoſe who fell at *Thermopylæ*, carved on Braſs, to tranſmit their Fame to Poſterity.

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Shall we after this therefore laugh at a Militia ?—call it an undiſciplined Mob ?—— And think it uſeleſs for the defence of our Country ?—I wiſh only that they, who are guilty of this ridicule, may on the like occaſions behave no worſe than theſe *Swiſs*; —or, becauſe arbitrary Princes have for theſe three laſt centuries neglected their Militias, and for their own views rendered them purpoſely uſeleſs and undiſciplined, ſhall we therefore conclude, that no regulations can bring them back to their ancient perfection, or make them again ſerviceable ?—Or ſhall we more abſurdly argue, that the ſame rules that make a Militia regular and well-diſciplined in *Switzerland*, will be unſucceſsful in *England*, and that the ſame cauſes will not produce the ſame effects in one Country as well as another ?

" But it may further, perhaps, be urged, " that a Militia is unneceſſary, ſince we " may be better defended by augmenting " our National Army, or by hiring foreign " troops."—I ſhall anſwer plainly to this objection, that both theſe methods are dangerous and unconſtitutional.—I entertain not thoſe abſurd apprehenſions of a

ſtanding Army, that poſſeſs ſome People, neither do I think that 20,000 ſoldiers of that ſort could ever be deſtructive to our Conſtitution; but I am confident, that an Army may be ſo far augmented as to become deſtructive:—I entertain alſo the higheſt opinion of the Officers of our preſent Army; I believe them to have as warm a regard for their Country as any Native whatſoever; many of them are men of Property, others are heirs or allied to families of Property, and would loſe as much in the general wreck as any: but I am ſure, that theſe gentlemen will agree with me, that in ſome future century it might be poſſible to alter and model ſuch an army, and make it conſiſt of Perſons not ſo public-ſpirited as themſelves; and if its numbers ſhould happen at that time to be conſiderably augmented, no more, perhaps, than what would be abſolutely neceſſary for our ſecurity againſt a Foreign Invader, I ſhould then (if I chanced to live in ſuch an age) be ſeriouſly apprehenſive indeed for the liberties of my country;——ſo that we are in this Dilemma, either ſo keep our Army ſo low as to be inadequate to the purpoſes

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for which it is intended,—or to raiſe it ſo high as to make it one time or other dangerous to our Conſtitution; for certain it is, that any number of Troops which will be ſufficient to repel the ſtrength of *France*, will have the Power, if they ſhould have the Inclination, to enſlave us; and that they who can defeat them, who would otherwiſe be ſuperior to us, muſt neceſſarily have this country at their mercy.——Or, if it was poſſible to ſuppoſe, that an Army, thus modelled and powerful, could not be induced to defeat, by one haſty blow, the public-ſpirited labours of ſo many Centuries, and that it would be even wiſe in a free People, to rely on their virtue in this particular—may we not ſtill have reaſon to apprehend, that by the influence and dependance of ſo large a body, an intereſt may be created, dangerous and repugnant to the ſpirit of our Government,—which may direct the Legiſlature in an improper manner, though it may not at once ſubvert it;—which will operate inſenſibly to our deſtruction; and, though leſs violent in its progreſs than the former Evil, will be no leſs fatal to the Conſtitution?

Here, indeed, it may juſtly be replied, that theſe dangers are very far remote, and that we are not only ſecure at preſent from any apprehenſions of this kind, but that we alſo poſſeſs a large ſtock of freedom in reverſion; ſince there is an Heir to the Crown, whom nature has adorned with virtues, peculiarly calculated to make the people of this Country hereafter happy, and who will prolong for many years the free ſpirit of his Grandfather's Government:—But it is the duty of an *Engliſhman* to be even timidly ſuſpicious in the concerns of his liberty, and to labour for its continuance in his moſt remote poſterity; to accept, with gratitude, the favours of good Princes, but to ſecure himſelf with caution againſt the oppreſſions of the bad.——And, ſhall we not be careleſs Guardians of our Country's Rights, if lulled aſleep by ſome temporary advantage, we ſhould not deſcry a diſtant danger, or through indolence ſhould not labour to prevent it?

But, if there was no danger in this method, the expence of it is alone a ſufficient reaſon to reject it: a Militia, conſiſting of upwards of 60,000 men, will coſt, one year with another, under

under 160,000l. and will put the Nation to no further charge, but only during the time of an actual invaſion:—A regular ſtanding Force, of the ſame number, will exceed two millions a year—8000 *Heſſians*, with all the concomitant expences, for this ſummer's ſervice only, will coſt near 800,000l, and the whole of the expence of the land forces for this year, (though we ſhall have acted every where on the defenſive,) will probably exceed three millions; and though the eſtabliſhment of this year will not be equal to the number propoſed by a Militia by ſeveral thouſands, it will ſurpaſs it in expence by almoſt twenty times the ſum;—I calculate only in the groſs, for my argument does not require exactneſs; ſince the experience of laſt winter, and the difficulties which our Miniſters found to diſcover new Taxes, on which to borrow the money, plainly proves, that we ſhall not long be able, in the time of war alone, to raiſe a much leſs ſum than theſe calculations require; and we ought to be at the ſame expence to keep up theſe troops in the time of peace, if we mean to have them always ready, and to be totally freed from all apprehenſions; the moſt ignorant,

ignorant, however, muſt know, that a conſtant charge of this ſort is beyond the abilities of this exhauſted Country. This alone would be ſufficient for its deſtruction, and would ſave its enemies the trouble of an invaſion.

But let us ſuppoſe, "that there would be no "need of maintaining theſe troops but in "time of war, and that they might be "raiſed juſt as occaſion requires."——But would they, for that reaſon, be the leſs dangerous to our Conſtitution? Is it not at the evening of a war that thoſe fatal ſtrokes are generally given, when an Army flushed with its victories, and proud of its achievements, thinks its own merits never ſufficiently rewarded, and dreads its approaching diſſolution?——And, is the charge of new levies ſo very inconſiderable? Which *Monticuculi* (who underſtood the detail of theſe things better than any man) obſerved to be ſo great, that he adviſed his maſter on the principle of œconomy, to keep the ſame number of forces always on foot, rather than be at the expence of raiſing them afreſh at the commencement of every war; and would it not in ſuch a ſituation be in the power of our enemies, by a pretended

alarm, to force us into ſuch an expence, whenever they pleaſed; and almoſt to terrify us into our deſtruction, and to make us, like ſome timid animal, run ourſelves down with fright, when perhaps no real danger is near us?——And after all, can we eſteem theſe new levies, raiſed in haſte and collected out of the dregs of the people, preferable to, or better diſciplined than a National Militia, who will at leaſt have learned ſomething of their buſineſs before they are called into ſervice? I fear, indeed, that it is the inexperience of theſe new levies, that makes *England* ſeldom ſucceſsful at the beginning of a war; and that it is the great expence which they coſt, and the great burden, which a Miniſter muſt neceſſarily lie under on ſuch an occaſion, that makes him never enter into a War ſo ſoon as the intereſt of his Country requires.

What a wretched fluttering thing is a *Britiſh* Miniſter at the eve of a War? More afraid of his private enemies than thoſe of his Country; he delays engaging with the one, that he may avoid the attack of the other; and that he may keep his own power the longer unmoleſted, he lets the power of his Country be diminiſhed, and her honour be inſulted — at length, when the

the enemy have had time to carry their point, and have already got poſſeſſion of what is contended for, compelled by clamour, he plunges into a war:—Confounded and irreſolute, he now pretends to guide the Helm of a great State through the ſtorm, with hardly his own wits about him—his firſt ſtudy and expence is to protect the Continent — his ſecond to preſerve himſelf, —his laſt to defend his country—he is at a vaſt charge for new levies, which will be raiſed, when they are no longer wanted; and diſciplined by that time they are to be broken;—and under the pretence of a neceſſity of his own creation he detains the *Britiſh* Fleet in port, after having expended millions in equipping it with cannon that are never to fire, and ſails, that are never to be unfurled.—Is this the art of government? This ſenſeleſs, deſtructive, ill-concerted piece of confuſion? And ſhall we prefer this to a Conſtitutional Internal Force, on which a regular plan of action may be formed, which will make us always ſecure at home, and enable us to be victorious abroad?

One more method of defence remains to be conſidered, which is that in which we

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at preſent place our truſt, "the defence of "foreign Mercenaries." The expence of theſe would alone be a ſufficient objection to them, which is greater in every particular, than the charge of a ſtanding army of native ſoldiers; for beſides their ſubſiſtence, which they receive at the ſame rate as our National Troops, we pay for them ſubſidy-mony, — levy-money, — tranſporting-money, — recruiting-money;——every one of which Articles are carried to a vaſt height; and for ſome of them we pay double what they coſt the Prince who ſupplies them;—but the more material arguments againſt them is, that they are more dangerous even than a ſtanding army can be to our Conſtitution.—I ſhall here ſpeak with caution; for if I was to urge all the objections which might be brought againſt troops of this ſort, eſpecially at a time when we are under the unhappy neceſſity of employing them, I may appear, perhaps (what I am ſure is not my intention) deſirous of inflaming; my countrymen may form ſome idea of their danger from one or two inſtances in their own hiſtory—troops of this ſort have always been unuſeful or dangerous to whoever em-

ploys them; their conduct at firſt has generally been peaceable and enſnaring—at laſt ſeditious and deſtructive; and thoſe ſtates, that have carried the points, which they intended by their aſſiſtance, have uſually, in the event, been enſlaved by them; *Machiavelli* ſpeaks fully on this point, " le " Mercenarie, ſono inutili & pericoloſe, " & ſe uno huomo tiene lo ſtato ſuo fon- " dato in ſu l'armi Mercenarie non ſarà " mai fermo ne ſicuro," and afterwards he aſſigns the reaſon, " la cagione di queſto, " e, che non hanno altro amore ne altra " cagione le tenga in campo, che un poco " di ſtipendio, ilquale non è ſufficiente a " fare, che ei voglino morire pe te." And after having produced a great number of examples out of the hiſtory of the *Italian* ſtates to prove this, he concludes " & fu " ſempre opinione & ſententia digli huo- " mini ſavii, che niente ſia coſi infermo & " inſtabile, comé la fama della potenza non " fondata nelle ſerze proprie." There is alſo a farther reaſon, which *Machiavelli* was not aware of, that particularly diſqualifies a free people for any army of this nature; —the unreaſonable jealouſies which ſuch a Nation will contract concerning them, and

the ill-treatment they will in conſequence thereof, perhaps, ſhew to them, may provoke the moſt regular and beſt diſciplined troops to do that through reſentment, which through inclination they never intended; never ſurely did troops behave themſelves with more exact diſcipline than thoſe which our Legiſlature has thought proper to invite at preſent to our aſſiſtance; and yet I would aſk the good-natured part of my Countrymen, whether, on this occaſion, their own ardent and laudable love of liberty, through a miſtake in the application of it, has not treſpaſſed a little on their humanity? —And if all the above arguments were inſufficient; it is certainly beneath the dignity of a great and independent Nation to rely upon thoſe for its defence, whom they are not ſure they can always obtain, when they want them,—or even keep, when their ſervice is moſt required.

It remains, therefore, that a National Militia is the only defence on which this country can ſafely rely, or which it can afford to keep; the conſtant charge of this will be immaterial, and then we ſhall only be obliged to part with any conſiderable ſum for its ſupport, when the ſafety of the Whole is

in danger ; and if we at the ſame time keep up our ſtanding Force to ſomething more than the preſent Eſtabliſhment in time of peace, theſe two bodies would be a mutual aid and check to each other ; the laſt would be in the nature of the old feodal Militia, and would more immediately be under the command of the Crown ; the firſt would reſemble the old National Militia, and would in a more eſpecial manner be the Army of the Legiſlature—the one would repel any ſudden inſult ; the other any premeditated Invaſion—the one might on a proper occaſion carry the glory of our Arms into diſtant Countries ; the other ſhew the ſtability of them at home ; —the one would be our offenſive Arms ; the other our defenſive ;—the one would be the ſword of the Commonwealth ; the other its impenetrable Buckler ; and both together would form one uniform plan of Government, which would make us hardly ſenſible of the confuſions of war, and reduce it almoſt to the calmneſs of peace ; —the ſame ſteady, manly, regular, conduct would appear in both ; every temporary, and violent expedient would be made

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unneceſſary ; the exorbitance of Taxes would in time be reduced ; and we ſhould then no longer be obliged to augment a debt, till at laſt it deſtroys us,—though perhaps in the midſt of ſucceſſes ; which makes us, in fact, always weaker by our Conqueſts, and poorer by our Acquiſitions ; and war would then no more be a Fever of the State, which, let the event be good or bad, has conſtantly preyed on the vitals of this Country.

Upon the whole, therefore, if it has been ſufficiently proved, that in the Plan, which was laſt year propoſed for eſtabliſhing a National Militia, the command of it was placed in ſuch hands, as the Principles of our Conſtitution require,——that the trade of this Country will not be diminiſhed at all by ſuch an Inſtitution ; or if at all, no more than what is abſolutely neceſſary for the ſecurity of the remainder—that the ſcheme itſelf is capable of execution, and will in the event prove adequate to the purpoſes for which it was intended ;—that the danger, without it, is imminent, and conſequently the neceſſity of it apparent ; I flatter myſelf that no farther arguments need be brought in ſupport of this Plan.—I hope therefore that every lover of his Country will

concur

concur in promoting it in this Seſſion of the *Britiſh* Parliament; it cannot perhaps be brought in the firſt inſtance to perfection; whoever has peruſed our Statute Books muſt have obſerved, that every one of our Inſtitutions advanced gradually by various Laws and frequent amendments to their preſent State;—with what zeal will a wiſe Miniſter encourage a ſcheme, which will render all his future Toils pleaſant and proſperous?—And ought not all parties (who equally pretend the good of the whole to be their object) to join in embracing a Deſign, on which the ſafety of the whole depends—Leſt therefore we ſhould betray our want of that public Spirit, which we all ſo loudly profeſs, by rejecting the only means of preſervation at this important Criſis, on account of ſome neceſſary trouble in the execution, and leſt we ſhould thereby expoſe thoſe ſacred truſts, in defence of which our Anceſtors fought and fell, and which are now conſigned to our care for the ſake of ourſelves and our poſterity.——Let us, like the champion of *Iſrael*, reject the arms of another, for like him we have tried them; they never can properly fit, and their weight may perhaps oppreſs us, but with our own ſtaves and our

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own weapons let us deſtroy the enemy that defies us.

Other inducements might ſtill be urged in ſupport of this Plan, if I was inclined to ſhew at large the Misfortunes of my Country at a time, when many too much deſpair already of its Situation ;—its natives, though by nature brave, are now deſpiſed and dejected — though wealthy, it is brought into Diſtreſs—though powerful, it is become contemptible—its Fleets, though more numerous than at any Period of our Hiſtory, are now no longer victorious,—and its wealthy and populous Colonies are every where inſulted and invaded by the leſs powerful Settlements of its Enemies ;—a fatal Charm ſeems to poſſeſs it, and defeats every advantage which the bountiful Hand of Nature has beſtowed upon it.—This melancholy Proſpect has made ſome Perſons entertain a Sentiment unworthy of a *Britiſh* Spirit, that the Power of this Nation is ſo far unequal to that of *France*, that we muſt ſubmit to any Terms of Peace which our Rival ſhall impoſe upon us.—Shall we, who have voluntarily entered into ſo many Wars to ſupport the Independency of other Nations, at preſent deſpond of our own ?

And

And are we doomed now only to feel ourſelves weak, when it is our own Cauſe in which we are to fight, and our own Country which demands our protection?—The want of Power is not the Cauſe of our Misfortunes, it is the want only of a proper Method of exerting it;—this Nation has now more than double the ſtrength which it had in the memorable year 1588; and the Houſe of *Auſtria* was not then leſs powerful than that of *Bourbon* is at preſent; we were able, however, at that period, to ſecure our own Coaſts, to annoy thoſe of the Enemy, to defeat his Fleets, and deſtroy his Settlements in the *Indies*. Let us now, therefore, ſhew the ſame wiſdom, and exert the ſame ſpirit, and we ſhall extricate ourſelves from our preſent difficulties, not only with ſafety but with honour. Our firſt point muſt be to ſecure ourſelves at home. This effect can alone be produced by the Eſtabliſhment of a NATIONAL FORCE SUFFICIENT FOR OUR DEFENCE, BUT NO WAYS REPUGNANT TO THE SPIRIT OF OUR CONSTITUTION—a Conſtitution, which having been preſerved (though much in ruins) by Providential Events from the encroaching Spirit of the *Tudors*,—and again reſcued by the virtue of our Anceſtors from the more haſty violations of the *Stuarts*, has

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now ſurvived for almoſt ſeventy years, repaired, improved, but not wholly perfect; its civil Inſtitutions have been largely and wiſely conſidered,—its Military Eſtabliſhments have been totally neglected; and it has paid moſt dearly for the neglect, by loſſes, by debts, by panics, by diſhonour;—its caſe is not as yet, however, totally irretrievable; its may ſtill be able to ſubſiſt in its preſent unnatural courſe, until its Inſtitutions have taken effect, provided it haſtens their accompliſhment; but they will require all our wiſdom in the contrivance, and all our vigour in the execution; and if the Ingratitude of thoſe whom we endeavour to ſerve, ſhould ſometimes make our labours unpleaſant, we muſt remember, that the End we ſeek is the Preſervation of our Country. When this Iſland was frequently plundered, and almoſt conquered by the *Danes*, the perfidious invaders of ancient times, the cauſe of it was, that a proper attention had not been paid to the diſcipline of the *Saxon* Militia; and it is recorded among the wiſe Inſtitutions of the virtuous *Alfred*, that by new regulations he brought back this once martial body to its firſt ſtate of perfection, and thereby relieved his kingdoms from the fury of *Daniſh* incurſions.—

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